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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. This twenty-fourth report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2191 (2014) and paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2258 (2015), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on the information available to United Nations agencies on the ground, from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, other Syrian sources as well as open sources. Data from United Nations agencies on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 31 January 2016. More recent data have been included where available.

II. Major developments

A. Developments on the ground

3. Widespread conflict and high levels of violence continued throughout the Syrian Arab Republic in January. Indiscriminate and disproportionate aerial bombings and ground attacks by Government forces, supported by its allies, and indiscriminate shelling by non-State armed opposition groups and designated terrorist groups,[1] continued to kill, injure and displace civilians. The conduct of hostilities by all parties continued to be characterized by a widespread disregard for the rules of international humanitarian law and the obligation of all parties to protect civilians.

4. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) documented attacks by all parties to the conflict, as well as unattributed

[1] On May 2013, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Nusrah Front were designated as terrorist groups by the Security Council in accordance with resolution 1267 (1999). The two groups operate in the Syrian Arab Republic.

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attacks that resulted in the killing of more than 400 civilians and injuring of hundreds more during the reporting period.[2] These included air strikes and shelling with the use of artillery, barrel bombs, mortars and rockets, as well as car and suicide bombings in populated areas. Private property, civilian infrastructure, and protected structures, such as schools and hospitals, also continued to be damaged and destroyed. The ongoing hostilities also continued to displace people, with humanitarian partners reporting some 200,000 people displaced in 11 governorates during January and early February.

5. Open sources also reported on civilians killed during the reporting period. For example, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights published the death of 1,345 civilians while the Syrian Network for Human Rights published the death of 1,382 civilians. The United Nations was not able to verify these cited figures.

6. Fighting intensified throughout Aleppo governorate during January and February. Government of Syria ground offensives in northern Aleppo, backed by heavy aerial bombardment on a daily basis by Syrian and Russian air support, had reportedly resulted in some 500 civilian deaths as of 11 February, according to open sources. In addition some 61,000 people have also been displaced, mostly northwards towards Azaz and the Bab al-Salam border area. Civilian infrastructure, including several medical facilities, was also severely damaged. Humanitarian operations from Turkey to Aleppo and other governorates are continuing, but have been disrupted as a result of the ground fighting and heavy bombardment along major towns and transport corridors from Turkey towards Aleppo. While the recent fighting killed hundreds and displaced tens of thousands, the recent Government offensive also resulted in the end of the three-year encirclement of the nearly 30,000 people living in the government-controlled enclaves of Nubul and Zahra. Fighting between Government forces and its allies, non-State armed opposition groups and ISIL was also reported in Aleppo city and surrounding areas, resulting in death and injury. For example, on 16 January, according to information received by OHCHR, an airstrike hit a building used as a medical clinic in the non-State armed group controlled Sokkari neighbourhood of Aleppo city reportedly killing seven civilians, including four children. On 25 January, Government air strikes hit the town of Termanin, west of Aleppo city, allegedly killing at least 6 civilians, and injuring more than 20. Meanwhile, non-State armed opposition groups also continued their shelling of Government-controlled neighbourhoods, including Manshieh, Azizieh, and Saad Jabri, reportedly resulting in multiple civilian casualties, according to open sources. Meanwhile on 16 January, ISIL cut off the water supply to Aleppo governorate from Al Khafseh water treatment facility on the Euphrates River affecting some 2 million people.

7. Heavy fighting was reported in Damascus and Rif Dimashq governorates. Fighting between Government forces, backed by Russian air support, and non-State armed opposition groups continued in and around eastern Ghutah, accompanied by intensified aerial bombardments and shelling. Information received by OHCHR indicates that some 50 civilians were killed and hundreds injured as a result of

[2] These figures are based on incidents documented by OHCHR during the reporting period according to their human rights monitoring methodology. It is not a full representation of all incidents that may have impacted civilians during the reporting period. Despite requests, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has not granted access to its territory to either OHCHR or the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

multiple air strikes in eastern Ghutah during January. On 7 January, several air strikes were carried out on residential areas in Erbin, causing the death of at least 12 civilians, and injuring approximately 85. On 12 January, a kindergarten was hit in Deir Al-Asafier killing two civilians, including one child. Meanwhile, in western Ghutah, the main road between Daraya and Madimayet Elsham was cut off on 27 January following intensified shelling and air strikes around the two besieged towns. On 24 January, open sources reported that the southern part of Madimayet Elsham was hit by several air strikes and missiles, killing five people and injuring 26 more, and an estimated 500 families were reportedly displaced inside the city. Displacement was also recorded in Balaliyeh and Nashabieh as a result of ongoing fighting and heavy bombardment.

8. Non-State armed opposition groups also launched several attacks in Damascus and Rif Dimashq, with the city of Damascus subjected to continued shelling. According to information received by OHCHR, non-State armed opposition groups struck populated areas in the capital, killing and injuring many civilians and damaging infrastructure and residential buildings. For instance, on 6 January, nine civilians were killed and at least 36 were injured when several mortar rounds fell on al-Shaalan, Abu Rummana, Hamra and Baghdad Street.

9. In Idlib, towns controlled by non-State armed opposition groups were subjected to almost daily air strikes by the Government and its allied forces, causing widespread destruction. For example, on 10 January, 47 civilians were reportedly killed and 100 others were injured, and a number of shops destroyed, when a market in Ma'aret Nu'man was hit. On 11 January, missiles struck a primary school in Anjara, killing 10 civilians, including 9 children. On 16 January, Government aircraft struck the local council building in Fayloun, reportedly killing eight civilians and injuring a dozen more. Another attack on 28 January, which struck a number of residential buildings in Kafr Takhareem, reportedly killed at least 12 civilians and injured 20.

10. Heavy fighting was reported in northern rural parts of Homs Governorate, with Government forces launching offensives in and around Talbiseh, Rastan, and the Houle Plain, cutting off the remaining supply routes and encircling the area. Aerial strikes by Government forces resulting in civilian casualties were also reported: on 11 January, five civilians, including a child, were killed in air strikes by Government forces on Rastan. Reports indicate that the 120,000 civilians in these areas face rapidly worsening humanitarian conditions, including a severe lack of food, high prices of available goods in markets, and medical supplies.

11. Civilian casualties and injuries were also reported in Homs city as a result of attacks by listed terrorist groups. For example, on 23 January, two car bombs exploded in the Wadi al Dahab neighbourhood, injuring at least 15 civilians. According to information received by OHCHR, the Nusrah Front claimed responsibility for the attack. On 26 January, ISIL claimed responsibility for a car bomb and a suicide bombing in the Zahra neighbourhood, killing over 20 civilians and injuring 50. In Rif Dimashq, on 31 January, ISIL claimed responsibility for twin car bombs and one suicide bomber that detonated at the Sayyida Zeinab shrine which killed 45 civilians and injured dozens.

12. In Dayr al-Zawr governorate, ISIL launched a series of offensives on the besieged neighbourhoods of Joura and Qusoor in Dayr al-Zawr city, resulting in dozens of civilian casualties and damaging public and private property and

infrastructure. OHCHR also received reports that some civilians trying to flee the ISIL advance were executed by ISIL: for example, 17 male civilians were killed in Bghiliya while trying to flee an ISIL attack on 16 January. On 22 January, according to information received by OHCHR, air strikes of an unknown origin were carried out on different areas in western rural Dayr al-Zawr, including Tabiya, Albo Leil, Kharita, as well as ISIL-held areas around Dayr al-Zawr city. At least 55 civilians were allegedly killed, including 40 in Tabiya and 12 in Albo Leil. On 23 January, air strikes on Khsham, in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killed at least 50 civilians.

13. Fighting continued in southern Syria during the reporting period. In Dar'a governorate, government forces seized control of Sheikh Miskine and Atman town north of Dar'a city, close to the Ramtha border crossing. OHCHR received reports of numerous civilian casualties as a result of rockets, artillery and air strikes by Government and allied forces, including on 13 January when six civilians were killed by ground and air strikes on Nawa and Dar'a city. Some 36,000 people were displaced in Dar'a as a result of the recent fighting. In Lattakia, government ground forces, with Syrian and Russian air support, made advances against non-State armed opposition groups, capturing one of the last non-State armed opposition group-held towns in Lattakia by the end of the month. On 30 January, government forces allegedly shelled the Obeen camp housing internal displaced persons in northeast Lattakia governorate, causing the death of at least one person and injuring tens of others.

14. The Russian Federation as well as the United States-led coalition forces continued to carry out air strikes in Syria throughout January according to reports received by official sources. While not providing data for the full month, the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation confirmed that it had carried out more than 1,120 "combat sorties" during January, engaging 3,256 targets in the Governorates of Aleppo, Hasakeh, Raqqa, Idlib, Damascus (presumed to include Rif Damashq), Dar'a, Dayr al-Zawr, Hama, Homs and Lattakia. Meanwhile, the United States Central Command confirmed that at least 114 strikes were carried out by the United States-led coalition in the month of January against ISIL targets in the governorates of Aleppo, Hasakeh, Raqqa, and Dayr al-Zawr. OHCHR received numerous reports of air strikes reportedly by international actors in which civilians were killed or injured, including in Raqqa, Rif Dimashq, Dayr al-Zawr, and Idlib governorates, which killed some 200 people and injured hundreds. However, OHCHR was not able to adequately verify the origin of the reported air strikes.

15. There were developments regarding several local agreements during the reporting period. In the Qadam district of south Damascus, which had been under a local agreement since August 2014, further agreement was reached between the government and non-State armed opposition groups inside which some 3,000 civilians were enabled to return to their homes in the district. The Government of Syria is still restricting the movement of civilians inside the neighbourhood, pending clearance of possibly remaining mines or other unexploded ordinances. Local agreements in Wadi Barada, Rif Dimashq, and Al Wa'er, Homs, also continue to hold, despite reported violations of the agreement and some provisions of the agreements remaining to be implemented.

16. Despite violations to the ceasefire, the Four Towns agreement covering Zabadani, Madaya, Foah and Kafraya also continued to hold, with the United

Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross/Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivering assistance on 11, 14 and 18 January. However, follow-up medical, nutrition and food deliveries to Madaya, Foah and Kafraya have not been possible owing to disagreements among the parties to the Four Towns agreement. The parties continue to negotiate further simultaneous medical evacuations.

17. In besieged Madimayet Elsham, the local agreement broke down after Government forces closed the main road to the town late in December 2015 and shelled the areas. On 22 January, a government negotiator reportedly warned non-State armed opposition groups inside the city to surrender their weapons or the city would be evacuated and declared a military zone.

B. Human rights

18. The scale and severity of abuses and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including abductions, summary executions, and deaths in custody, remained grave during the reporting period. On 8 February, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic launched a report entitled "Out of sight, out of mind", detailing how Syrian civilians have been arbitrarily arrested, unlawfully detained, taken hostage, or kidnapped since the conflict began by all parties to the conflict. The report describes how thousands of detainees held by the Syrian Government have been beaten to death, or died as a result of injuries sustained as a result of torture. The report also details the acts of other parties to the conflict including non-State armed opposition groups, Nusrah Front and ISIL, including cases of cruel treatment, executions, torture, murder and summary executions.

19. OHCHR received reports that, on 18 and 19 January, 25 alleged members of the National Defence Forces were reportedly summarily executed by ISIL following fighting in Dayr al-Zawr governorate.

20. On 12 January, ISIL reportedly sentenced two drivers to 40 lashes and imposed an 800 Syrian Lira fine in Dayr al-Zawr city for attempting to transport civilians to areas outside ISIL control. Other reports received also indicated that ISIL has prohibited civilians from leaving areas under its control. OHCHR also received reports alleging that ISIL was forcibly moving civilians from Ramadi, Iraq, to western rural Dayr al-Zawr. The reasons behind such deportations remained unclear.

21. During the reporting period, OHCHR received reports alleging the abduction of civilians by the Nusrah Front in Idlib city. According to information received, at least 11 civilians were abducted from their homes in Idlib in January by the Nusrah Front and taken to undisclosed locations.

22. On 9 January, a Kurdish schoolteacher was taken from his home in Qamishly. The Kurdish National Council later accused the Democratic Union Party/People's Protection Unit (PYD/YPG) of abducting the teacher, whose whereabouts remained unknown.

23. On 2 January, OHCHR received information that the PYD/YPG allegedly forcibly evicted 16 civilians from their houses in Ras el Ain, north-west of Hasakeh. According to information received by OHCHR, all those evicted were ethnic Arabs. The houses were then reportedly rented or used as offices.

C. Humanitarian response

24. In January 2016, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all modalities from within the Syrian Arab Republic and across borders pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015). Non-governmental organizations also continued to deliver assistance to people as in previous months. The Government of Syria continued to provide basic services to areas under its control as well as in many areas beyond its control.

United Nations agency	*Number of people assisted in January 2016*
World Food Programme (WFP)	3.6 million
World Health Organization (WHO)	657,000 treatments
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	2.05 million
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	267,000
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	112,925
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	66,000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	290,000

25. Cross-border deliveries continued during the reporting period. As at 31 January, the United Nations and its implementing partners had sent 256 shipments from Turkey and Jordan to the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015), benefiting millions of people. The attached map provides more information on United Nations cross-border convoys. In line with resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including content, destination and number of beneficiaries.

26. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism continued its operations in Jordan and Turkey. In January, it monitored 17 United Nations humanitarian shipments consisting of 540 trucks, confirming the humanitarian nature of each, and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Monitoring Mechanism continued to benefit from excellent cooperation with the Governments of Jordan and Turkey.

27. In January and early February 2016, the following inter-agency convoys were completed, assisting over 125,000 people in need:

Date (2016)	*Destination*	*Type of assistance*
11 January	Madaya/Buqayn (Rif Dimashq); Foah and Kafraya (Idlib)	Food, medicines, medical and nutrition supplies
11 January	Al-Wa'er (Homs)*	Food, medicines, medical, nutrition and non-food items
14 January	Madaya/Buqayn (Rif Dimashq); Foah and Kafraya (Idlib)	Wheat flour, health and nutrition supplies, water and sanitation supplies and non-food items
18 January	Madaya/Buqayn, Zabadani (Rif Dimashq); Foah and Kafraya (Idlib)	Fuel (Madaya/Buqayn and Foah and Kafraya); food, wheat flour and health supplies (Zabadani)
4 February	Al-Wa'er (Homs)	Food, health, non-food items, nutrition, water and sanitation support, and education supplies. Medical supplies, including surgical items and diarrhoea kits were removed by Government security forces

* The delivery to Al-Wa'er on 11 January was the final part of a convoy requested and approved by the Syrian authorities in 2015; it was not related to a request made in 2016.

28. United Nations agencies also undertook cross-line deliveries in January. For example, WFP and partners reached 5,000 people in Zakieyh and Tiba in Rif Dimashq. UNICEF completed the rehabilitation of water pumps and other water supply infrastructure in Idlib Governorate, providing access to water to some 300,000 people. In response to the water supply being cut in Aleppo city, UNICEF scaled up its water trucking operation, supplying 5 million litres of water per day, sufficient to meet the needs of 375,000 people.

Humanitarian access

29. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need of assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic remained challenging in many areas of the country as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, and deliberate restrictions by the parties on the movement of people and goods, including burdensome administrative procedures.

30. Access to the 4.6 million people living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remained of critical concern (see attached map of current besieged and hard-to-reach locations). In 2016, 55 inter-agency convoy requests have been submitted to besieged and hard-to-reach locations, with the following status as of 15 February:

Status of inter-agency convoy requests as of 15 February	*Requests*
Approved and convoys proceeded	4
Approved in principle; awaiting facilitation letters	5
Submitted and pending approval by Government of Syrian Arab Republic	46
Total	**55**

31. Intensified conflict and worsening security conditions in several governorates hindered the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as people's access to essential services. Major supply routes from Damascus to Dar'a, Sweida and Homs remained vulnerable to insecurity due to ongoing clashes. WFP remained unable to access high-conflict areas of Rif Dimashq, rural Homs, rural Hama, and its cross-border partners continued to be unable to conduct distributions in Kafr Zeita and Kafr Nabutha subdistricts in northern rural Hama owing to insecurity. Meanwhile, the shifting conflict lines in Aleppo governorate early in February also severely disrupted humanitarian operations, particularly from Turkey into eastern Aleppo city. In Hasakeh, a large number of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices deployed in Hasakeh city and insecurity in Qamishly city has also hampered humanitarian programming.

32. Deliberate interference and restrictions by the parties also continued to prevent aid delivery. For example, WFP continued to be unable to reach people in need in ISIL-controlled areas of the country owing to the inability to work independently and to monitor activities. This affects some 720,000 people in almost all of Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqa governorates, parts of rural Aleppo and east rural Homs, as well as pockets in southern rural Hasakah and northwestern rural Hama.

33. As a result of these factors, the United Nations agencies and partners reached only 32 of the 154 hard-to-reach locations (21 per cent). Nearly half of the people in hard-to-reach areas are in ISIL-controlled areas, to where the United Nations has extremely limited access. However, in January, UNICEF delivered an additional 100 tons of water disinfectant to Raqqa, sufficient to meet the needs of the entire population for over two months, as well as aquatabs.

34. Details of assistance to people in hard-to-reach areas in January 2016 are contained below.

Sector (United Nations delivery only)	*Number of people reached in hard-to-reach areas*
Food security	238 800
Health	119 000
Non-food items	99 600
Water, sanitation and hygiene	587 900

35. Owing to security concerns, since 27 December 2015 the Nusaybin/Qamishly crossing has been temporarily closed by the Turkish authorities. No humanitarian assistance went through the crossing in January. Reports of high food prices and shortages in some essential commodities, like yeast and sugar, were received in Hasakeh governorate.

36. No major improvements in the administrative procedures required by the Syrian Government for the delivery of humanitarian assistance were reported in January. The administrative procedures in place with regard to humanitarian operations continued to delay or limit the delivery of aid by United Nations agencies and partners.

37. As of 31 January, 9 United Nations visa requests (either new visas or renewals) remained pending, all of which were within the 15 working days' limit. In

January, a total of 79 visas for United Nations staff from 10 different agencies were approved, 30 of which were new visas and 49 of which were renewals.

38. A total of 16 international non-governmental organizations are authorized to operate in the Syrian Arab Republic. They continued to face a series of administrative hurdles and restrictions that impact their ability to operate. They remain restricted in their ability to partner with national humanitarian organizations, open sub-offices, conduct missions, join inter-agency convoys and undertake independent needs assessments.

39. The number of national non-governmental organizations authorized to partner with United Nations organizations increased from 139 to 141 in January. Authorized national non-governmental organizations continue to operate under complex procedures in partnering with United Nations agencies.

Besieged areas

40. Of the 4.6 million people living in hard-to-reach areas, some 486,700 people remained besieged in the Syrian Arab Republic. This includes some 274,200 people besieged by the Government of Syria in various locations in Rif Dimashq; 6,000 people besieged by the Government of Syria and non-State armed opposition groups in Yarmouk; some 200,000 people in Dayr al-Zawr city who are besieged by ISIL; and some 12,500 people who are besieged by non-State armed opposition groups and the Nusrah Front in Foah and Kafraya in Idlib governorate.

41. The parties to the conflict continued to entirely or heavily restrict access to besieged areas. In January, some 61,000 people (12 per cent) were assisted in besieged areas. The flow of commercial supplies through official routes remained largely blocked, leading to high prices for commodities reaching besieged areas through unofficial and irregular supply lines. Freedom of movement remained heavily restricted, though limited numbers were sporadically allowed to exit and re-enter some besieged areas.

42. In eastern Ghutah, Rif Dimashq, some 176,500 people remain besieged by Government forces in the following locations: Duma, Harasta, Arbin, Zamalka, Ain Tarma, Hammura, Jisrein, Kafr Batna, Saqba and Zabadin. No United Nations assistance was provided in these areas during the reporting period. Meanwhile, the Unified Medical Office for Douma announced the suspension of the dialysis services for patients suffering renal failure in eastern Ghutah owing to the lack of supplies for haemodialysis. Reportedly, two patients died of renal failure during the reporting period. On 13 February, SARC delivered 5,400 infant formula milk cans, 2,000 insulin boxes, supplies for 250 dialysis sessions and medicines to Duma.

43. In Madaya (and Buqayn) in Rif Dimashq, some 42,000 people remain besieged by Government forces. Reports of severe malnutrition continue to be received. In Foah and Kafraya in Idlib governorate, some 12,500 people remain besieged by non-State armed opposition groups and the Nusrah Front. Joint United Nations/ICRC/SARC convoys delivered assistance sufficient for one month to Madaya, Foah and Kafraya on 11, 14 and 18 January as part of the Four Towns Agreement. After initially gaining access to Madaya, the United Nations and ICRC/SARC submitted repeated requests to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for clearance for safe and unimpeded access to return with additional supplies, training teams and technical experts to address the situation on the ground. Although some approvals

have been granted, including the entrance of SARC mobile clinics, approval for sustained and unfettered access remains pending. On 4 February, the United Nations and ICRC/SARC submitted a further request to the Syrian authorities for a convoy to the towns covered under the Four Towns Agreement.

44. In Zabadani in Rif Dimashq, some 700 people remain besieged by Government forces. On 18 January, assistance for 1,000 people was delivered to Zabadani.

45. In Daraya in Rif Dimashq, about 4,000 people remain besieged by Government forces. The United Nations has been unable to deliver assistance to Daraya since November 2012.

46. In Madimayet Elsham in Rif Dimashq, about 45,000 people remain besieged by Government forces. Living conditions are reportedly worsening, with reports of deaths due to severe malnutrition and lack of basic medical supplies. On 21 January, the United Nations received approval to deliver aid to the buffer zone between the last Government checkpoint and the entrance to the besieged town, but not inside the besieged area. On 8 February, the Syrian authorities reiterated that the United Nations had approval to deliver to the buffer zone, but not inside Madimayet. The United Nations has not accepted this because of the serious protection concerns arising with distribution in the buffer zone. On 3 February, a SARC convoy delivered aid to the areas surrounding Madimayet, and a limited amount of medical aid inside the besieged area. On 8 February, SARC delivered further aid to the areas immediately outside Madimayet.

47. In Yarmouk in Damascus, some 6,000 people are besieged by Government forces and non-State armed groups. All UNRWA operations in Yarmouk remained suspended in January. Reports indicate that there are no functioning medical facilities due to insufficient medical supplies and trained medical personnel. The United Nations last delivered assistance to the area in December 2015, when UNICEF delivered nutrition, health and winter clothing supplies via implementing partners. UNRWA was not permitted to conduct any missions to Yalda, Babila and Beit Sahm in January but it received blanket approval to resume regular programming in these areas early in February 2016 following an interruption of over six months. On 13 and 14 February, UNRWA distributed food supplies for 2,100 families in Yalda town, serving civilians residing in Yalda, Babila, Beit Sahm and Yarmouk. Other humanitarian organizations have been allowed to deliver assistance to these areas.

48. In the Government-controlled western neighbourhoods of Dayr al-Zawr city, some 200,000 people are besieged by ISIL. Some 3,200 families were displaced within the besieged part of the city during the reporting period following offensives by ISIL. The humanitarian situation in the besieged areas continues to deteriorate sharply, with shortages of food and medical care, and severe malnutrition reported during the reporting period. The planned United Nations air bridge — approved in principle by the Syrian authorities — remains unfeasible at the current time owing to the airport's proximity to the front lines. The Russian Federation confirmed that it had airdropped relief supplies to Dayr al-Zawr on several occasions during the reporting period.

Free passage of medical supplies, personnel and equipment

49. United Nations and health partners received reports — which are in the process of being verified by the United Nations and partner organizations — of 13 attacks on medical facilities in January. Multiple attacks on medical facilities in February have already been reported. For example, on 15 February, UNICEF received reports of attacks against four medical facilities in February, two of which were in Azaz, Aleppo and two in Idlib.

50. Physicians for Human Rights released its report in January on attacks on medical facilities in 2015. A total of 112 attacks on medical facilities were documented from January through November 2015, making it the worst year on record for attacks on medical facilities, surpassing the 89 attacks in 2012. In total, Physicians for Human Rights has documented 336 attacks on 240 separate medical facilities between March 2011 and November 2015. According to Physicians for Human Rights, Syrian Government and Russian forces are responsible for over 90 per cent of these attacks.

51. WHO and its implementing partners delivered over 110,000 treatments through cross-line operations in Aleppo, Idlib, Rif Dimashq, and Homs governorates in January. During the reporting period, WHO submitted 15 requests to the Government of Syria to send medicines and medical supplies to hard-to-reach and besieged locations in nine governorates targeting over 2.5 million people. The majority of these requests are pending. The Syrian authorities recently approved a request to send medicines and medical supplies to Duma in Rif Dimashq. On 4 February, forces of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic removed medical kits from an inter-agency convoy to Al Wa'er.

52. The restricted access for medical aid to reach populations in need owing to active conflict and constraints imposed by the parties to the conflict continues to lead to loss of life and lack of life-saving medical assistance. The inhibition of delivery of essential medicines, medical supplies and equipment, as well as damage to many health facilities, particularly to hard-to-reach, besieged and non-State armed opposition group-controlled areas continues to lead to severe gaps in service delivery.

Safety and security of staff and premises

53. On 3 February 2016, three SARC volunteers were killed and one seriously injured while distributing bread in Aleppo governorate.

54. One staff member of an international non-governmental organization was killed and another injured by an improvised explosive device by unknown actors in Idlib on 25 January 2016.

55. A total of 34 United Nations staff members, 30 of whom are UNRWA area staff, 1 from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1 from UNICEF; 1 from UNHCR/United Nations Office for Project Services; and 1 from OCHA continue to be detained or missing. Five UNRWA staff members were released in 2015 and one released recently. The total number of humanitarian workers killed in the conflict since March 2011 is 85. This includes 17 staff members of the United Nations, 51 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, 8 volunteers and staff members of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and 9 staff

members of international non-governmental organizations. Of the 85, 19 have been killed since 1 January 2015.

III. Observations

56. As this conflict enters its sixth year, targeted and indiscriminate attacks against civilians, residential areas and civilian infrastructure have continued unabated and with near complete impunity. Since the start of the year, thousands of civilians have been killed, injured or displaced by the ongoing violence and the parties' disregard for the basic tenets of international humanitarian law. **Even as the United Nations talks commenced in Geneva at the start of February, I was shocked by the scenes of thousands of people fleeing for their lives from the unrelenting aerial bombardment in Aleppo governorate.** There can be no justification or defence, for continuously failing to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure. Such attacks are unacceptable and unlawful and I call on the parties to immediately halt all actions that can result in civilian loss of life or damage to essential infrastructure.

57. The recent report published by the independent international commission of inquiry on deaths in detention in Syria is another stark and gruesome reminder that violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law continue to be perpetrated on a daily basis by all parties to the conflict. Detainees held by the Government were beaten to death, or died as a result of injuries sustained as a result of torture. Others perished as a consequence of inhuman living conditions. Non-State armed opposition groups and listed terrorist groups took individuals hostage and subjected detainees to serious abuses, including torture and summary executions. Such actions are reprehensible and may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. There must be accountability for these and other crimes.

58. I am extremely concerned about the incredibly dire situation facing the 486,700 people living in horrific conditions under siege in Syria. The continued reports of high levels of malnutrition and numbers of death due to lack of basic medical care emanating from besieged areas are shocking and cause for deep concern. The main responsibility for this immense suffering lies with the party imposing a siege. It is, however, shared by those who put civilians in harm's way by using them as shields for military activities or by those who take advantage of their suffering by taking bribes or selling food at exorbitant prices. Persons protected under international humanitarian law, particularly civilians and the wounded and sick, must be allowed to leave besieged areas, should they wish to do so. I remind all parties that the deliberate starvation of civilians as a method of warfare constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law and could amount to a war crime.

59. Despite their international legal obligations and the demands of the Security Council, all parties to the conflict continue to obstruct humanitarian assistance to those most in need and to withhold consent for operations in an arbitrary manner. Notwithstanding the valiant efforts of humanitarian organizations and staff that continue to assist millions of people, millions more are still left with no or insufficient access as a result. I call on the parties and those Member States with influence on them to urgently and without any hesitation or dilution take all necessary steps to bring sustained access throughout the country, particularly in besieged or hard-to-reach areas. The United Nations remains committed and ready

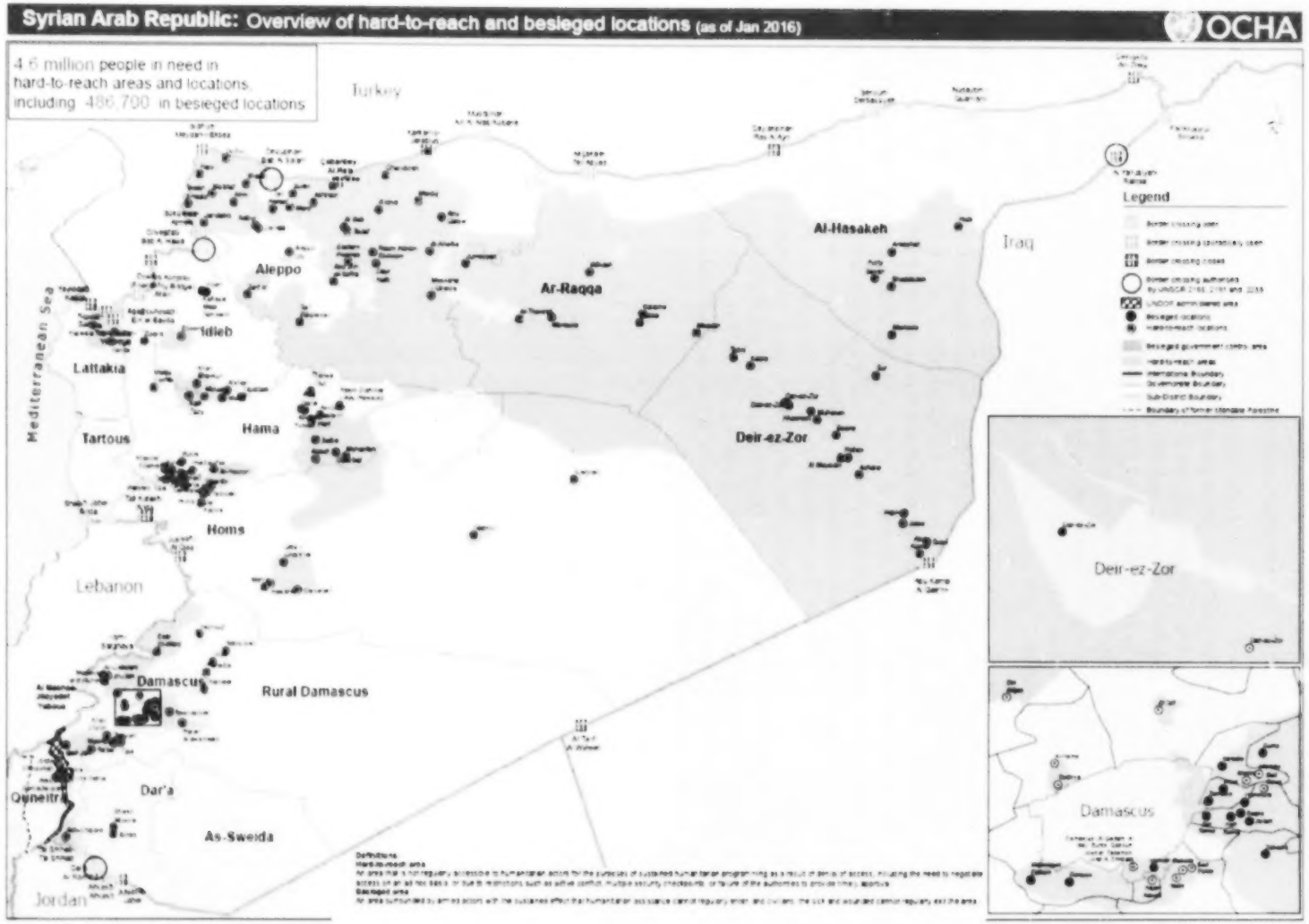
to deliver aid and protection for civilians, whoever and wherever they are, based on need and vulnerability and not on political considerations.

60. On 29 January, my Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, commenced intra-Syrian talks in Geneva between representatives of the Syrian Government and the High Negotiations Committee. Consultations also took place with women, civil society groups and other national stakeholders. On 3 February, my Special Envoy announced he was to recess talks as of 5 February because of unresolved procedural matters and the dramatically deteriorating humanitarian situation on the ground. However, the fact that all relevant Syrian actors did come to Geneva ready to discuss the end of the conflict and the future of their country, is in itself positive and should be supported. I look forward to the resumption of the intra-Syrian talks.

61. I welcome the sustained momentum and resolve to put an end to the Syrian conflict demonstrated by the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), whose ministers gathered in Munich on 11-12 February. I support their agreement to establish two task forces to ensure that all in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria are assured sustained access, as well as to implement a nationwide cessation of hostilities, in parallel with steps towards a political transition process. The United Nations shall do its utmost to support the implementation of the agreements reached by the ISSG as part of the implementation of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) in all its aspects. The Syrian conflict has long gone beyond the abilities of the Syrians themselves to end it. The time has come for the international community to put their differences aside, for all parties to act with restraint and redouble efforts towards a political solution, lest the world is prepared to deal with the repercussions of this war inside Syria and far beyond.

Annex

Maps


Syrian Arab Republic: Overview of hard-to-reach and besieged locations (as of Jan 2016)
OCHA
4.6 million people in need in hard-to-reach areas and locations, including 486,700 in besieged locations
Turkey
Iraq
Lebanon
Jordan
Mediterranean Sea
Aleppo
Idleb
Lattakia
Tartous
Hama
Homs
Ar-Raqqa
Al-Hasakeh
Deir-ez-Zor
Damascus
Rural Damascus
Dar'a
As-Sweida
Quneitra
Legend
Deir-ez-Zor
Damascus

Syrian Arab Republic: United Nations cross-border operations under UNSC resolutions 2165/2191/2258 (July 2014 to January 2016) OCHA

UN Security Council Resolution 2165/2191/2258

Through the unanimous adoption of resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2258 (2015) until 10 January 2017, the UN Security Council has authorized UN agencies and their partners to use routes across conflict lines and the border crossings at Bab al-Salam, Bab al-Hawa, Al Yarubiyah and Al-Ramtha, to deliver humanitarian assistance, including medical and surgical supplies, to people in need in Syria. The government of Syria is notified in advance of each shipment and a UN monitoring mechanism has been established to oversee loading in neighboring countries and confirm the humanitarian nature of consignments.

Sector Classifications

Food: food baskets
NFIs: dignity kits, blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, sleeping mats, mattresses, winterization kits, tarpaulins
WASH: basic water kits for families, water purification tablets, hygiene kits for families and babies, sanitary napkins, diapers
Health: emergency health kits, surgical kits, reproductive health kits, midwifery kits, medical consumables
Education: recreational kits

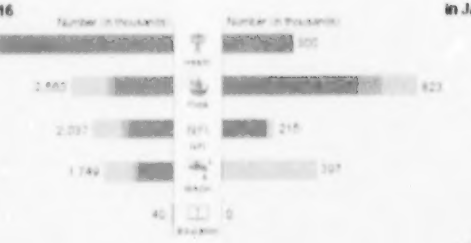
Number of Beneficiaries Assisted by the UN and its partners

Since 14 July 2014 to January 2016

256 Convoys 7 Agencies

Trucks 6,046

391 Bab Al-Hawa 483 Bab Al-Salam Ramtha



in January 2016

6 Agencies 16 Convoys

Trucks 533

412 Bab Al-Hawa 63 Bab Al-Salam Ramtha

Number of beneficiaries per month per sector

Number of trucks per month per crossing point

*Number of beneficiaries increased by 336,927 due to the delivery of food on rigid trucks. This figure represents potential beneficiaries in catchment areas and does not represent the actual number of individuals receiving assistance in these areas.

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